

Another Day, Another War

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Summary: Spartan B340, more commonly known as Ginger, fought along side the Master Chief during the Reclamation of Earth. After the death of John 117, Ginger presses forward with his plans to clone the Master Chief. The Covenant Remnants scan Requiem for another Cloning Tower, but stumble upon a new-old threat... Sequel to Move On, My Spartan.

1. Chapter 1

Chapter One: Remains

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><p>Covenant Remnants Headquarters, Requiem, September 4, 2559, 3:43pm<p>

* * *

><p>"I'm just asking. Could there be another one?" The Spartan asked. He was clad in blue Gen II Recon armor, with his helmet tucked under his arm, exposing his red hair.<p>

The Kig-Yar stood up, and walked over to a holographic display of Requiem. "If there is, then it could be anywhere on the entire planet."

Ginger stared at Eray. "So there is the possibility?" Eray nodded. The two had become close friends after the Reclaiming of Earth, over a year ago. Ginger had helped Eray, some rouge Covenant forces, and some abandoned Marines destroy a cloning tower that the Elites were using.

Eray nodded. "Not only possible, but most likely. The only problem would be finding it." The Jackal gestured to the holotable. "There are several places on this planet that have been unexplored. It might be a while, but I'll send search teams out to look for one."

"Thanks, that's all I wanted to know." Ginger slowly put his helmet on, and Destinee appeared on the comm screen. The AI was one of the three people that Ginger had told about the blood samples that he had, and how he planned to use them.

"Do you really think it will work?" Destinee asked as Ginger left the room, heading for the portal that he had come through.

"I really don't know. I hope," Ginger replied. "That guy was like a father to me. The one I never had..." His mind wandered to his father, who had died when he was three. He could remember talking to John on the Infinity shortly after John had become his trainer.

"Mind if I sit here, sir?" Ginger asked, noting that John looked lonely.

"No, go ahead," he answered, returning to his food.

"Thanks, sir," Ginger said as he sat down. "Permission to speak freely, sir?"

"Go ahead."

"I've heard the stories about you and Katana, and I-"

_"Cortana," John corrected. _

"Right. I just want to let you know that I know what it feels like to lose someone you loved. You see I was-"

And that was when Butch had interrupted the conversation. He was going to tell the story about how he lost his father to the Covenant.

The portal was guarded by Hunters, who remained silent as Ginger walked up to them. The portal led back to Earth, and it was guarded by Spartans. They saluted him as he past. Oh, right. Due to his major part in the Reclaiming of Earth, he had been promoted to Sergeant. He was even in charge of a Fireteam. A full, four member Fireteam, with him being the fourth. Bad thing was that he hadn't even met them yet.

The Infinity was dock at the Cario Station in orbit above Earth. Pretty soon, it would lead a fleet over to Reach and see what needed to be done for reterraforming. And to eliminate any Covenant still on the planet, if any.

One thing about the Human-Covenant War, there wasn't a glass shortage. Windows and the like could be repaired easily.

Ginger walked toward the Pelican that would take him to the massive warship. Captain Deland had requested that he come aboard for some unknown reason. Ginger scoffed as he thought about the new Captain. A few months after they re-took Earth, the UNSC had deemed Thomas Lasky not suitable for the position of Captain, as he had developed a drinking addiction. He was discharged from the UNSC.

Ginger glared at the grey-haired, balding man that was waiting as his

Pelican docked. "Captain Deland, sir!" Ginger saluted, but only because he had to.

"Spartan Ethan Torrance, Service Tag B340. Am I correct?" Deland asked.

"Yes sir." Ginger really hated this guy. Plus he hated anyone that called him by his first name. That made the Captain double hated.

"ONI Search teams had uncovered something, and have assembled a team of others to identify it. You are one of them." Deland knew how much some people hated ONI. "You'll find them in Lab 2342." The Captain turned and walked away, and Ginger shot him the bird. Other Spartans clapped at the gesture, and high fived Ginger. The Captain had no idea of what had happened.'

Lab 2342 was dark, the only light source coming from datapad in someone's hands. "Glad you could make it, B340. I guess that's everyone." The lights slowly brightened, revealing the man with the datapad to be wearing a suit emboldened with the ONI pyramaid. He noticed everyone else in the room. The legendary Doctor Halsey, Lachlan S6784, and former Captian Lasky.

Lasky was dressed in casual civilian clothes, with a few stains on his white shirt. His jeans were torn around the knees. Then he noticed the objects on the table.

It appeared to be Gen II armor, but it was in terrible condition. The paint was burned away, leaving it at its original steel color. There was only half of the torso piece, and a few small pieces of random parts. Some were charred and melted in some places.

"Now, this was found under the remains of the Seattle Space Needle. Can you, in any way, confirm that this is Spartan 117's armor?"

Well, now that Ginger looked at it, he could see faint traces of drab green. "I don't know," he blurted out.

"That's okay, we didn't expect any of you to. It's too messed up." The ONI spook seemed quite friendly. "We'll keep it aboard the Infinity in case you need to look at it some more."

He left the room, leading Halsey away by her arm. A Spartan IV escorted Lasky out, and Ginger and Lachlan stared at the armor. It had been over six months since they had seen each other.

"So, could it possibly be John's armor?" Ginger asked.

"I doubt it. He took a direct hit from the Infinity's mainf cannon." Lachlan was in his undersuit, calmly chilling out.

"So, how's you new Fireteam?" Lachlan had also been appointed his own Fireteam.

"They're okay. One is a complete idiot, one is a pervert, and the other seems normal, but sucks with his Sniper Rifle. And they all wear shades of blue armor." Lachlan seemed to think about it for a moment. "Have you met yours?"

"No. That's where I was heading after this," Ginger was kinda scared to meet them. The UNSC was practically recruiting several new people into the Spartan IV program to fill the open spots from the massive killing of Spartans during the fake Covenant invasion, and the Reclaiming of Earth.

"I suggest you hurry," Lachlan advised. "My team is facing yours in the War Games Tournament that starts today."

"Fuck, I forgot about that. Well, see ya!" Ginger sprinted out of the lab and off to find his team.

UNKNOWN LOCATION: UNKNOWN TIME

A single figure was trudging through the sand, contemplating all that had happened over the past few days. He wanted to go home, but that was slightly out of the question...

**A/N: Howdy! I got so many requests asking for a continuation of Move On, My Spartan, or for a sequel. In truth, I had always planned on a sequel. And here it is. **

**There will be more with Lasky in the future, and quite a bit of other stuff. Also, there is a hidden clue about Ginger's Fireteam in the chapter. That's all I will say.**

**Peace out!**

2. Chapter 2

Chapter Two: Roses are Red...

UNSC Infinity War Games Simulator-Map: Ragnarok, September 4, 2559, 6:23pm

Ginger dove behind the Mongoose as the rockets impacted the base, causing the ground to shake.

"Incoming!" A Spartan in orange Gen II Mark VI armor ran out of the base, and over to a pile of rocks to hide behind. The Spartan's armor bulged around the waist, making it seem as he were over weight...

"Grif! You're supposed to yell that before the rockets hit!" Simmons yelled. Ginger had met his team, and he really wasn't impressed. At least he didn't have Lachlan's team.

"Sir! I suggest we send Grif out on a scouting mission," Sarge said. He was the one that Ginger had appointed second in command, mainly because he was a military man.

"Why should we?" Ginger asked.

"Well, if he dies, then we won't have to listen to him anymore," Sarge told him.

"He'll just respawn know that, right?"

"Wait, really?"

Grif ran back into the base. "You shouldn't have told him that!" Sarge took off after Grif, and a few shotgun blasts echoed in the base.

The words 'Sarge betrayed Grif' flashed on Ginger's HUD. Ginger rolled his eyes. "I hope you guys won't do that. It makes our team lose points."

"But killing Grif should be done. It's like when a mosquito lands on your arm. You kill the parasite. When you see Grif, you kill the parasite," Sarge explained, cocking his shotgun.

"But we have more important things at hand," Ginger said pointing at the Mantis that was advancing on their position. Grif respawned and sloppily jogged into the base. "I'm going to take a nap. If you need me, don't wake me!"

Four sharp cracks echoed in their ears, and the Mantis fell down burning. Simmons tossed aside the empty clip in the Sniper Rifle as he ran over. "Enemy Mantis down, sir."

"Thanks, at least you did something right," Ginger praised. If Sarge seemed slightly offended, he didn't say any thing. "That means we only have two kills to win, right?" Simmons nodded. "Okay, then we move out toward the Binary Rifle, and Sarge, you take point."

"Yes sir!" Sarge saluted, and took off running, with Simmons and Ginger struggling to keep up. Before Ginger could issue another command, Sarge was struck with hard light, falling to the ground as his body disintegrated into orange particles that rose in the air like ashes from a fire.

"And of course, someone beat us to it," Simmons said, right as he was struck as well. Ginger aimed his SAW in his hands, advancing with the utmost caution. He was going to kill whoever this was.

"S'up." Lachlan stepped out into the open, tossing the empty Binary Rifle away. He reached for the shotgun on his back, and walked slowly toward Ginger. "I only need one more win to win the match, and you are it."

Ginger fired the entire remaining thirty shots in his SAW at Lachlan, who raised a Hardlight Shield, blocking the bullets. Next Ginger tried a frag, which Lachlan countered by charging straight at him, firing a single shot when he was close enough. Ginger felt the pain from the shot, and fell to the ground, and died.

"Dammit," Ginger muttered as the Simulation room returned to the normal white that it was, and the Hardlight terrain and weapons and vehicles disintegrated, leaving the giant empty room.

"The winner is Fireteam Violet!" the announcer shouted, apparently overjoyed. Ginger pushed himself up, and headed to his quarters.

"Sir?" Simmons walked over. "Shouldn't we plan a strategy for the next match we're in? You know, so we're prepared?"

"Simmons, go talk it over with the rest of the team," Ginger yawned and stretched before adding; "And don't let Grif be the lookout in any of plans." Simmons ran off to find Sarge and Grif, while Ginger reached his room and plopped down on his cot, which groaned under the weight of his armor.

"I'm sorry you lost," Destinee appeared on the terminal in the room. "But there was a strict 'no AI' rule."

"It's okay." Ginger removed his helmet, and dropped it to the floor. "How are the samples?"

"There are holding up, and they should be fine, just like the last thousand times you asked," the teal AI chirped, brushing back a bit of her lime green hair. "Still no word from Eray."

Ginger sighed. He hadn't expected them to find anything, even though they had only been looking for a few hours. His eyes wandered to the wall, where he saw a picture frame. Inside of it was a haiku. He stood up and read it, finding little comfort in it. It was just the ravings of a rampant AI.

"Destinee, get me a pass. I'm going down to Earth to drink the night away."

Seattle, Night Club-Pandora, September 4, 2559, 8:42pm

Ginger was now in his casual clothes, blue jeans and a leather jacket, and walking towards his favorite night club. He and Lasky met there sometimes, just to talk and drink, and try to pick up chicks.

Getting in was easy. All he had to do was flash his Spartan ID tag, and he was in. And he got free drinks, since he was one of the leading figures in the Reclamation of Earth. The inside of the club was decorated with items salvaged from the fallen Elites and Prometheans, mostly weapons. Behind the bartender were two full operational Light Rifles, crossed on the wall in an X formation. It was illegal to own them by UNSC regulation, but Ginger wasn't about to report them.

Sitting alone at a table in the very back was Lasky, and for the first time in a while, he looked sober.

"Mind if I sit here, sir?" Ginger asked as he approached the table. Despite Lasky was no longer in the UNSC, Ginger still called him 'sir', because he was used to it.

"Go ahead." Ginger sat opposite of Lasky, noting that the former captain had a nearly empty plate of cheese fries in front of him. "What's the news?"

"Nothing much, just the War Games Simulation Tournament. My team got creamed in the first round," Ginger said, as he waved at a group of girls while pointing at his Spartan tags. They giggled and smiled, apparently taking interest. Ah, this Spartan life.

Lasky scoffed at him. "You always seem to get the girls." He stared off into the distance, or in this case the empty plate of cheese fries. Most of the cheese had landed on his shirt. "Both of the ones

I liked died."

Well, that was unexpected. Ginger stared up at him. "Sir?"

"I don't want to talk about it right now. Can you leave me alone? I just want to be alone."

"Yes sir," Ginger replied, and stood up to follow the group of girls. His phone vibrated in his pocket. As he pulled it out, he noted that it was Destinee. "What do you want?"

"Nice to see you too. I got a message from Eray. He said that they might have found another Cloning Tower. The one they found is different in design, but it is completely accessible. Once they get inside, they will let you know." Destinee cut the call, leaving Ginger in a state of suspense.

"I hope it is," Ginger muttered to himself.

Unknown Location, Unknown time-Year-2559

Alone. Abandoned. Forgotten. That was how he felt. It had been a while since he had seen civilization, being stranded on this desolate island. It was tall and plateau like, with a smaller one nearby, and an even smaller one farther out. There were a few scattered trees, and wild birds and other animals were his source of food. He was sick of them.

He looked off the edge of the plateau and down at the ocean. It would be easy to jump and end his life. But with his luck he would survive. He always did.

3. Chapter 3

Chapter Three: Discovery

Requiem, January 5, 2559, 12:03am

Hunters led the way through the thick jungle, cutting through the dense shrubbery with their heavy iron shields. Eray and his Jackals followed behind. Jackals were the prime species in the Covenant Remnants, as Grunts were too cowardly, and Hunters didn't really seem to care.

Eray gripped his SMG's tighter as the rain poured down. He had obtained several crates of used weaponry from the UNSC through peace talks, and trading. They traded off Storm Rifles and other unneeded weapons in return for human weapons.

The lead Hunter growled, and let Eray pass. They had made it to the tower. It was slightly shorter than the first, overgrown with vines and other vegetation. "Send the Unggoy in first," Eray ordered, and four Grunts armed with Needlers, and one with a Fuel Rod Cannon, slowly walked into the entrance, careful with each step.

After a few minutes, they signaled for the rest of the search party to enter. Eray held an SMG in both hands, while some Jackals behind him aimed human BR55s around the room. The inside was also overgrown with plants, but there was a weird stench to the room.

Eray spotted a terminal in the room, with the Forerunner glyphs for Humanity on it. They would need a human to access the tower's function. But as far as he could tell, the structure had the same layout of the first cloning tower. He turned to the Kig-Yar with the UNSC radio backpack. "Contact headquarters, and tell them to tell the Spartan what we've found."

Seattle, Woodworth Hotel, Penthouse floor, January 5, 2559,
12:12am

Ginger sighed as he plopped down on the bed. It was the same room he, John, and Lachlan had been in when they were going after Butch and the corruptors of the Infinity. The Covenant had invaded with the fake ships shortly after. The Covenant managed to recover the Didact, who turned the Promethean forces that were fighting alongside the humans against the humans, before John had sacrificed himself to save him and Lachlan, killing the Didact in the process.

He smiled at the memory of John dumping weapons all over the bed. The radio was playing some old song from the Twenty-First Century.

Was it something I said or something I did

Did my words not come out right?

I tried not to hurt you,

Though I tried, I guess that's why they say

Every rose has its thorns,

Just like every night has its dawn.

Just like every cowboy sings a sad sad song,

Every rose has its thorns.

Ginger reached over and turned the radio off. He rolled off the bed, and out onto the balcony that they had jumped off of with their jet packs. Seattle had been hit the worst by the Covenant. The Seattle Space Needle was still in ruins, even though a reconstruction was planned. ONI wanted to search for any remaining trace of John or the Didact.

His phone vibrated in his pocket. Ginger rolled his eyes when he saw it was Destinee. "What now?"

"Well, someone's grouchy. Eray and his team scoped out the tower, and they found a terminal with the symbol for humanity. They want you there right away."

Ginger felt his heart race. His goal was possibly within reach. "Okay. Tell Lachlan to get the samples, just Chief's and Palmer's, and we'll meet at the portal."

"I'll tell him," Destinee responded. "What about weapons and armor?"

Ginger smiled as he stared at his suitcase and the UNSC trunk that he

had in his room. "I learned a thing or two." He ended the call, and dumped the contents of the suitcase onto the floor, revealing an collapsable MA5B and a Magnum, each with several spare clips. He stuffed the Magnum in his jacket pocket along with the spare clips, and put the MA5B back in the suit case, as he had no way of carrying it without seeming suspicious.

There was no time to put his armor on, and he ran out of the door, headed for the nearest taxi that he could find. Thirty minutes later, he was running into the building.

Lachlan had taken the fastest Pelican down to Earth, and was waiting for Ginger in right next to the portal, holding two tubes of blood. "Are you sure you know what you're about to do?" he asked, handing Ginger the test tubes.

"Yeah, come on!" Ginger sprinted through the energy circle, arriving at the Covenant Remnant's HQ. Two Jackals were waiting for them. "Phantom is this way." They took off running, bypassing several startled Unggoy, and the occasional human who was assigned here. The UNSC was currently trying to integrate Jackals, Hunters, and Grunts into their ranks.

The Phantom was hovering in the hanger, with several discarded Banshees to be sent for human use. Ginger jumped into the open hatch, keeping a tight grip on the tubes. Lachlan was still clad in armor, and went through the grav lift.

The ship flew off, and the Spartans watched though the open hatch doors as the rugged mountain terrain zipped by. They passed over the remains of the first tower that Ginger had destroyed, now with research teams, human and other wise, scanning every bit of the wreckage.

Soon they were over the ocean fly easily at three hundred miles an hour. Not bad for a Jackal pilot. They passed over three plateau like islands, and over mountains to the south of them. "Arriving at destination. Thank you for flying with Kig-Yar airlines. Please fly with us again soon," the pilot remarked as he eased over an open platform, cleared out by Hunters.

Ginger jumped out first, and then realized that he wasn't wearing his armor. "Shit!" He hit the ground hard before falling sideways. He gritted his teeth, keeping his tight grip on the tubes. As far as he was concerned, they were fine.

He saw Eray, flanked by two Jackals. "Where is it?"

"This way," Eray broke off into a run, with Ginger trying to keep up with him. They reached the facility, with Lachlan close behind. "Here," Eray pointed at the terminal.

Ginger ran over to it, and put his hand on the glyph. It changed from blue to orange, and a tray opened. Assuming that it was where you put the DNA, Ginger opened on of the tubes, and put a drop of blood on it. It automatically closed.

"I hope you know what you are doing. You might have just gotten us killed," Lachlan said, slightly nervous.

A bright orange light flooded the room, temporarily blinding everyone in it. "This has to work," Ginger said, squinting through the light. He was barely able to see the door in the side of the wall open.

The light died down, and Ginger saw the figure in the small room. He gasped at the sight. "It's Palmer! It worked!" Ginger threw up a triumphant fist, and prepared the next tube.

Lachlan walked over and helped Palmer to her feet. That's when everyone noticed a flaw in the device. She was butt naked.

"Um...okay," Ginger tried not to look.

Lachlan opened the pouch of medical supplies and checked her over. "Can you speak? Say something." He didn't seem to care that she was in her birthday suit.

"I...I...what happened? Who are you? Where am I?" Palmer seemed confused, but there was something out of place.

"Do you remember getting killed?" Lachlan asked. Not something you would ask.

"I'm not dead. I'm right here." Palmer looked around the room, taking in the occupants. "Aliens! Are they friendly?"

"Oh shit, she doesn't remember!" Ginger shouted, smacking his face.

"Remember what? And why am I naked? Were you trying to take advantage of me? What's up with the robot?" She asked, pointing at the fully armored Lachlan.

"Well, this sucks." Ginger groaned.

Palmer walked over to him, trying to cover herself up. "I don't know what's going on here, and I want to know." She stared him in the face, looking up at him. Then it hit Ginger.

"She lost the augmentations," Ginger said, gesticulating to the height difference.

"Oh shit," Lachlan agreed. Eray and the Jackals stood in the background, trying to comprehend everything.

"Here," Ginger took off his leather jacket, and gave it to Palmer to cover herself up in. He walked over to Lachlan, and was almost there when he felt a gun pointed at the back of his head. "Fuck, I left that in my pocket."

"Tell me everything that's going on, or I'll kill you," Palmer ordered, dead serious toned.

4. Chapter 4

Chapter Four: The Beginning of the End

UNSC Infinity, Fireteam Rose Quarters, January 5, 2559, 2:34am

Sarge had stayed up most of the night, writing down several ways to kill Grif in the Simulator, and which would be the most humiliating. Grif was currently asleep, no surprise there. Simmons was out talking to Fireteam Violet, whose leader was out for the moment.

"Um...Sarge?" Simmons entered the room. "We might have a problem."

"What did Grif do wrong this time?" Sarge asked, resting his head in his hands.

Simmons shook his head. "It's not Grif. We think that O'Malley is back."

"You talking about that AI that could control other people? Even me?" Sarge was pretty sure that they had eliminated that AI years ago.

"Yeah." Simmons sighed. "We're not sure how, but one of the other Spartans in Fireteam Foxtrot was acting strange. He was talking in the same tone O'Malley used. But that was around a week ago. He most likely moved on by now. It might just be another AI like O'Malley."

"Come on. We have to tell the Captain," Sarge grabbed his shotgun, and smacked Grif with the butt of it. "Wake up lazy-ass! You can't sleep in the middle of a crisis!"

"I don't know if alerting the Captain is the best idea," Simmons said. "You see, he also has an AI slot, so it is possible that he is the one the AI went to."

Seattle, January 5, 2559, 4:42am

Ginger looked at the large bag in between him and Lachlan. After Clone-Palmer had pulled the gun on him, the Jackals raised their weapons, forcing her to lower hers. Ginger then held her down while Lachlan used a sedative in the medicine pouch they had with them to knock her out. Then, they put her in a bag until they got back to Earth.

"This is weird," Ginger admitted. They were on their way to the nearest ONI headquarters, where they planned to ask a certain someone for help.

"It's your fault. You're the one who wanted to clone the dead," Lachlan pointed out. Their taxi went over a bump, causing the clone-Palmer to wake up.

"What happened?" She asked, and then realized that she was in a bag. "What the hell?!" Lachlan put his finger to his mouth, ordering Ginger into silence.

The red head looked out the front window, and saw that the taxi was pulling over. It was run by a robotic system, so it couldn't have anything to do with the driver. Someone would have to have entered the stop command into the system to override the security.

The vehicle came to a complete stop next to a dark alley, where several large figures walked out, rifles in hand. "Spartans?" Ginger asked out loud, breaking the silence rule. There were four Spartans total, all carrying Battle Rifles. Two smaller figures were in between the Spartans.

"Get out of the car now, leave the bag," One of the Spartans ordered. She was aiming her rifle into the open window. Headlights of passing cars reflecting off of her pink Recruit armor. The BR55 was inches from Ginger's head, so he raised his hands and walked out, with the female Spartan holding the door open.

Two other Spartans took Lachlan by the shoulders, and dragged him out of the taxi, removing his helmet and tossing it to the ground. The fourth took the squirming bag out. He set it on the ground, and unzipped it, revealing Palmer, still dressed in Ginger's leather jacket.

Ginger heard a gasp behind him, and saw Lasky with his hands cuffed behind his back. A smaller figure walked out into the open. "Captain Deland? What the hell are you doing?"

Deland smiled. "I should ask you the same thing." Something about his voice was different. Deland walked over to the clone-Palmer and crouched down to make eye contact. "Commander Palmer, are you all right?"

"Who are you?"

"I am Captain Deland, the captain of the ship you were assigned to, the UNSC Infinity. You were about to receive augmentations to become a Spartan," Deland jerked his thumb at his Spartans, "And then these rebels kidnapped you. They must have hit you on the head pretty hard to make you lose memory."

"That's a lie!" Ginger blurted out, getting smacked on the back of the head by the pink Spartan.

Deland turned to Ginger and Lachlan. "For your crimes against the UNSC, you are to be executed right where you stand!" He picked up Palmer and helped her into the taxi. She seemed out of it, staring off into space, trying to remember false memories.

Lasky was pushed over to them. "So, this is the end of the line." Apparently, Deland wanted him dead too.

"I hate to admit it, but yeah. Looks like it," Ginger sighed. Things did look pretty bleak. The other Spartans raised their rifles, taking aim. Ginger squeezed his eyes shut. He heard the slides of BR55 sliding back, making an ominous click.

His final thoughts were drowned out by Battle Rifle fire.

Requiem, Covenant Remnants HQ, January 5, 2559, 4:56am

Eray looked at the human scientist with confusion. "What are you saying, human?"

"Look, that "Cloning Tower" has been operating for weeks before you found it. Something had been using it." The man was tired of

explaining.

"What proof do you have?"

"We found several blood samples of dead Spartans on the ground. Katy French, Jared Miller, and Gerald Herny were the owners of some of the blood. All were confirmed KIA during the Covenant invasion."

"But you're saying the tower was also an artificial intelligence containment room?" Eray asked. It was what the man had said.

"Yes. From what we can tell, there were two AIs, one was gone for a while, and the other some how left."

"But this AI can be dangerous, you claim." Eray was about to order all his troops into finding this AI. Maybe he could convince the Monitor to help him.

Location: Unknown, Time: Unknown, Year 2559

The fire glinted off the visor of his helmet. He held the small tree branch that contain a small mammal over the fire. For once, he had happened to catch his favorite food.

But, he was bored. Alone. Forgotten. Desolate. Just like she had been. The only difference was that she wouldn't be waiting for him in the end...

5. Chapter 5: Civil War

Chapter Five: Civil War

Seattle, September 5, 2559, 4:49am

"Open fire!"

"Hostiles!" Ginger heard the opposing Spartans shout. They had turned their attention away from their prisoners, and toward the people who had opened fire. Deland jumped into the taxi and took off, Clone-Palmer with him.

"We're gonna fucking die!" yelled a voice in the distance, presumably the attackers. Ginger recognized the voice, and groaned out loud. The Spartans fired at the attackers, in a much more orderly fashion than their attackers.

Lachlan wasted no time. He snapped the neck of the pink Spartan, and stole her BR55. He was still clad in his armor, save for his helmet which was on the ground a few feet away. He saw a Spartan aim a shotgun at his exposed face. A sniper round echoed in the alley, and the shotgunner flew backward, a gaping hole in the side of the head.

"Holy shit! Tucker! Did you see that? I actually hit him!" A voice called out. Police sirens wailed in the distance, obviously coming at them.

Ginger picked up the shotgun and fired, impacting a red Spartan, who turned to him, flicking his red-armored wrist, activating dual blades

of energy. "Shit," Ginger muttered, as the shotgun jammed.

A teal Spartan landed in front of Ginger, Energy Sword lighting up the alley. "Think you can use a sword?" He taunted the red Spartan. The red swung at him, but the teal blocked, showing some impressive skill as he twisted the handle, sent the other Spartan's sword flying through the air. With a lunge, the teal ran the red through, killing the Spartan. "That's how you use a sword."

Sarge ran out of the cover he was using, BR55 in hand, with his shotgun on his back. "Did we get here in time?"

Ginger looked at the dead Spartans on the ground. "Um...yeah. But what the hell just happened?"

"The captain has an AI slot, and we think that there is a evil AI on the loose," Sarge explained, handing Ginger the Battle Rifle.

"So, the AI somehow took control of Deland, right, causing him to act that way, right?" Lachlan asked, unbelievably, as Church and Tucker stood next to him.

"Correct. We think the AI is O'Malley, who we beat before. Or it could be one just like him," Sarge reached for his shotgun, relieved to have it back in his hands.

"That sounds crazy," Lasky butted in. "But, can I ask how the hell you had Palmer with you? She's been dead."

"Remember that cloning device that was in my report right after we took Earth back?" Ginger asked. Lasky nodded, putting two and two together. Ginger noted the look of pain in Lasky's face as he thought about her.

"Okay, we need to go after Deland. I left the Master Cheif's blood sample in the taxi, and we need to rescue Palmer," Ginger said, punctuating the sentence by cocking the BR55. "Anyone have a ride?"

"Way ahead of you," Sarge said. "Grif, bring the Warthog!" The headlights of the Warthog lit up the alley as Grif pulled up. It was an old troop transport Hog, without a turrent. It could fit seven people in it.

"Sarge, you take passenger, Grif you keep driving. Lachlan, you and your squad will sit in the back with me," Ginger ordered. The police sirens were getting louder.

"I never take orders from you, but fine," Lachlan jumped in the back, with the shotgun that he had gotten from the dead Spartan. Tucker and Church sat on one side, and Lachlan and Ginger on the other. Lasky sat crouched in the middle of the back, and stolen Magnum in each hand. "Floor it Grif!"

The Warthog tires kicked up dust as it took off, speeding at about 123 miles per hour. "Should I slow for traffic, or just dodge and weave?" Grif asked.

"Dodge and weave!" Ginger shouted over the rippling wind. "Hey, where are Simmons and Caboose?"

"They went to check your hotel room to see if you were there." Church explained, talking over the roar of the wind.

"Can you ask them to get my armor?" Church nodded.

Cars honked their horns as Grif dodged the traffic, going way over the speed limit, and breaking several laws at the same time. Ginger tightened his grip on the metal handles above him, lurching with every turn.

"Wait, so why exactly did you come after us?" Ginger asked.

"We wanted to warn you about the AI. We don't know how dangerous it is. We figured that it would be best to get someone who has fought in a major battle," Grif replied.

"If you beat this AI before, then why can't you do it again?" Lachlan questioned. Tucker and Church looked at each other. "Explain later," Lachlan said. He put his black Recon helmet on, tuning out the rushing of the air.

"What happened down there?" Destinee asked through the comms in Lachlan's helmet. "Do you know what is going on up here?"

"Fill me in."

"Well, Deland ordered anyone who had any form of association with you or Ginger to be interrogated about the cloning tower. They got nothing from any of them, and he ordered some new teams of Spartans to shoot to kill, not wanting to leave any trace of his questioning. A whole war is going on in the Infinity." To prove her point, automatic fire from a SAW echoed in the background, and was silenced when a rocket exploded.

"Um...okay. You lost me after shoot to kill." At that moment, machine gun fire hit the back of the Warthog, a few bullets hit Lachlan's shield. "Got to go!"

Ginger swore under his breath, and used Lachlan as cover as he peeked out. It was another Warthog, filled with enemy Spartans. There was one in the turrent, opening fire, with one with a Brute Shot sitting in the passenger side.

_It's been a while since I've seen a Brute Shot. Focus dammit! Focus!
_Ginger held his breath as he took aim with the Battle Rifle. The jerking motion of their Warthog combined with the other Warthog's motion made the shot impossible. He squeezed the trigger, and the triple round burst hit the windshield of the opposing Warthog, making three holes in it. Church fired his S2 AM at it, putting a hole in the gunner. The passenger returned fire with the Brute Shot.

The grenades impacted on the road, two flipping a car over, and the others hitting near civilians. Ginger could hear the panicking screams of the civilians as they flew by. "Grif! Any sighting of Deland?"

"Nope. Oh shit! Another Warthog in front of us!"

"Go around it! And keep-" Ginger was cut off when the Warthog behind

them exploded as a red laser tore through it. A Mongoose was coming after them, with Simmons on the back, Spartan Laser over his shoulder, and a Spartan recruit with standard gray armor with a yellow stripe on the helmet was driving.

"Sorry I'm late," Ginger heard Simmons say over the Warthog radio. He was nearly jerked out of the vehicle as Grif turned to avoid a head on collision with the other Warthog, which wasn't shooting at them. "Caboose should be in that Hog, along with your armor and weapons."

"Okay. Thanks." Ginger jumped out of the speeding Warthog. "Keep going, I'll catch up." He sprinted over to the Warthog, where the blue idiot was standing. The box containing his armor was sitting in the passenger seat. Ginger tore off the lid, and pulled his undersuit on over his clothes.

Simmons dismounted the Mongoose, and began to put Ginger's armor leg armor on, while the recruit went for the arms. Within a few minutes, Ginger was back in his blue Recon armor. "Okay, now let's get caught back up with Lachlan. Simmons, you drive." Ginger put the Spartan Laser into a weapon slot on the side of the Mongoose, where it was in easy reach. He pulled the slide on his Battle Rifle.

"No problem sir," Simmons said. "Stevens, Roberts, use the Warthog. And don't let Caboose drive!"

"I call shotgun!" Caboose yelled out in that strange voice of his. "Where is the shotgun?"

Ginger rolled his eyes as he got on the back of the Mongoose. Simmons got on and cranked the engine, getting it started. The recruit that had driven the Mongoose got in the driver seat of the Hog, while another that he hadn't seen climbed up onto the turret, gripping the handles tightly in her hands.

"Move out!" Ginger ordered. As the Mongoose zipped through the traffic, Ginger noticed something. Their path of travel after the Captain was in a circle. Perhaps Deland was heading to the portal. Deland, or whatever was possessing him knew about the portal, and mostly likely the tower. "Fucking floor it, Simmons!"

Requiem, September 5, 2559, 5:45 pm

The duplicate of 343 Guilty Spark hummed along as he passed over the Promethean Knights. They had reached the old Forerunner facility that was used for cloning ancient humans, and then implanting them with an artificial intelligence construct. These were the first phase of Prometheans.

But then, after only two constructs were made, the Composer was finished, and all work on the facility was abandoned. It was similar to the cloning tower that was made after the Composer's completion, which the Didact had used to replicate the ancient humans, and then compose them right after. It was quite clever.

But, Spark was here on business. It had been brought to his attention that a construct had found a way to escape. The other one had escaped several human years ago. According to the report, some humans intercepted it, and used it in some long forgotten project. It was

later destroyed by a team of Reclaimers.

Spark approached the entrance to the construct storage chamber, last sealed one hundred thousand years ago.

The Knights stood ready, as the facility was also used to hold the Forgotten, the term used for the the first phase of Prometheans that had been guarding this facility thousands of years ago, and were now rampant, attacking anything in sight. Scattered piles of fragile Forerunner, animal, and ancient human bones had proved that. It appeared that no one had ever entered the chamber in years, as the seal wasn't broken.

It was ominous, but along the wall were rows of hexagons that were supposed to light up with an orange glow whenever there was a construct was inside. None glowed orange. The construct had indeed escaped.

Seattle, ONI HQ, Research Lab 345, September 5, 2559, 4:57am

The legendary Catherine Halsey stood before the table, with ODS'Ts flanking her. She sighed, hating the life as a captive. On the table were the remains of the supposed Master Chief's armor. It was melted, looking like it was hit by plasma, rather than the Infinity's main cannons.

She ran her hand over it, feeling the lumps of melted metal, and the chest piece's worn out texture. Then, she noticed something. Something that no one else had noticed.

"Can you confirm that this was Spartan 117s?" It was the same ONI man as before, when they were on the Infinity.

"Yes, it is his." Halsey sighed, and backed away. The ONI spook motioned to the door, and the ODS'Ts escorted her back to her quarters, where there was a massive computer set up. ONI allowed her to continue her research, but had full access to everything on the computer. But, to their dismay, Halsey spent most of her time playing a game from a age old series know as the Elder Scrolls.

Halsey sat down at her computer, and loaded her last saved game. She honestly didn't know why she would waste her time on a video game. The graphis were out dated. The storyline was weird. It contained dragons.

Sighing, she felt a feeling of nervousness inside her. There was no way she was going to tell ONI that it _wasn't _John's armor...That would tell them that there might be a chance that he was still alive, which Halsey believed.

**A/N: Some of you might have noticed that I was accidently putting January in the time bar in the past few chapters, instead of September...I will fix this.**

6. Chapter 6: Return of a Hero

Chapter Six: Return of a Hero

Seattle streets, September 5, 2559, 5:00am,

"Ginger! We have sighting of Deland, or O'Malley, or whatever the hell he is," Lachlan said, as soon as he saw Ginger's call sign on his HUD. Grif swerved as he dodged another car, barreling straight at the hijacked taxi. Deland was ahead of them by several hundred yards, but a Warthog could catch up to that in no time at all.

_"Aim for the tires! I think he might know about the cloning tower!"
_Ginger shouted over the comm. _"He lead us in a circle around Seattle!"_

"Hit the tires," Lachlan calmly ordered Tucker, who aimed his BR55 in front of them, looking for a good shot. Lachlan heard the triple fire of the weapon, and then the discharge of a Railgun. The next thing he knew, he was going ass over teakettle as the Warthog flipped over and burst into flames. All the occupants were sent in several different directions, with Lachlan landing on the open road.

"What the fuck happened?" Grif asked, as he crawled away from the burning vehicle. Sarge was out cold on the ground several feet away, blood leaking out from under his helmet. Lachlan crawled toward him, and loud crack echoed around the streets, and something hit his arm, breaking his shields, and tearing his arm to hell. Blood rushed out as he tried to crawl back to cover, but he knew there was a very little chance that he could make it.

As he used his un-injured hand to slowly evacuate the scene, he saw what was going on around them. SAW fire was heard almost constantly, along with the triple bursts of BR55s, and Assault Rifles. It really was a war zone. His radio was filled with the chatter of several Spartan Fireteams, along with cries of pain and for help.

Looking up as he crawled, he saw Tucker reach out, and grab him by his good hand, and pull him behind the flaming remains of the Warthog. Grif and Church were also behind it, each with their own injuries. Grif appeared to be the only one bleeding, though.

"Ginger," Lachlan rasped, struggling to stay conscious after losing a lot of blood. "There's a sniper with some heavy weaponry, ambushed us. Take a different route."

"Copy. Are you okay? You sound terrible."

"Got shot in the arm. I'll be fine, but they took out the Warthog."

"How's Lasky?"

Lachlan looked around, but there was no sign of the former Captain. He might have been thrown out when the Warthog flipped, which means he could be dead on the road for all he knew. He decided to ignore the question for now. "Tucker, call for evac," he ordered, right before passing out from blood loss.

He woke only minutes later, to find the shell of the Warthog taking heavy SAW fire. The sky was lit up with explosions and bullets. Shots rang out from all over the city. Civilians were screaming, and some brave souls were recording the civil war that had broken out amongst the Spartans.

"Glad to see you're awake," Tucker said, peeking over the edge of the Warthog, and quickly withdrawing his head as a sniper round hit where it was a second ago. "We've been stuck down here, and pretty much screwed to die."

"What's new?" Lachlan muttered. Sarge was still laying face down on the pavement, blood staining the highway. A Pelican flew overhead, smoke billowing from the left engine. A rocket smashed into it, sending it down in one great big fire ball.

"Want me to patch up your arm?" Church asked, opening the crashed Warthog's medical supplies. At some point in time, he must have recovered the supplied without getting hit, since he seemed in one piece.

Lachlan nodded, and stripped off his shoulder and arm armor, and Church applied medical gel to prevent infection. Then he wrapped a bandage around his CO's arm, making it as tight as possible.

"Keep it tight," Church said, as he began to pack up the supplies. They would most likely need them later, as they were apparently stranded behind enemy lines.

"Gotta love tight," Tucker interjected, getting a groan out of the rest of Fireteam Violet.

"What's our plan of escape?" Lachlan asked, picking up his shotgun. The gunfire around them hadn't stopped, and he could tell that several Spartan Fireteams were taking a beating.

Church let out a sigh. "I'll cover you while you get outta here. That sniper will be after the first person to run out of cover."

"Church, that's suicide," Lachlan said. As the CO, he wouldn't allow it.

"I've been through worse." And with that, Church ran out from behind the Warthog. Lachlan stood up and ran over to Sarge, picking him up and slinging him over his good shoulder in one swift motion. Grif and Tucker ran ahead of Lachlan, as they sprinted in the opposite direction that Church had went.

A single, solitary sniper round echoed out, and to Lachlan, this one was louder than the others. Church's comm sign went offline.

"Shit," he muttered, adjusting Sarge over his good shoulder. They were running in the middle of the city, where several civilians were running around panicking, search for any source of cover. The fleeing Spartans rounded a corner, and right into the waiting barrels of enemy SAWs.

"Oh look," said a Spartan in white Tracker armor. She seemed to be the one in command of the four Spartan team. "If it isn't Lachlan S-6784. There's a bounty on your head."

She shoved Sarge off of Lachlan's shoulder, and shoved him into the wall of the adjacent building. The other Spartans did the same to Grif and Tucker. They removed their prisoner's helmets, to disable their shields.

"Any last requests?" Tracker asked, pulling the slide back on her pistol and taking aim at Lachlan's head.

"I want to fuck a girl one last time," Tucker replied.

"Request denied. Fatty, how about you?"

"I wish that your troops execute us with a 360 no-scope."

"Request denied."

"I wish for more time to think," Lachlan said.

"Request denied. Well then, this will be a simple execution. Several bullets to the face."

Someone cocked a shotgun behind Tracker. "Same for you," Sarge said, weakly holding up Lachlan's shotgun. "If any of you move, I'll blow her to hell!" he shouted to the enemy Spartans.

"Tucker, please don't comment," Lachlan interjected before the pervert could say anything.

Tracker spun around, kicking the weapon out of Sarge's weak hands. "Get over there and join them," she ordered coldly. Sarge's helmet was taken off and thrown to the ground. The enemy Spartans shoved the red against the wall with his comrades

"Now, waste no time and kill them!" The enemy Spartans raised their SAWs, aiming at the exposed faces. Tracker raised her pistol. "I'm going to get the bounty on S-6784."

A purple beam tore through her neck, her pistol fell from her hand, and clattered on the ground. The enemy Spartans turned and looked for the attacker, weapons raised. Another fell to the same fate, purple beam headshot.

"Kill the prisoners and ditch this party, man!" One shouted. He had kept his gun trained on the captives as the two members were killed, and was about to pull the trigger when he was lifted up into the air, clutching his chest and crying out in pain. The last remaining anti-Spartan turned around, SAW blazing, trying to kill the assailant. He was cut in half.

The figure deactivated its Active Camo, revealing it to be a Sangheili, dressed in golden armor, not the Zealot or General type, but a different type all together. It was used to indicate a heretic. Lachlan had heard of this Elite before.

It was the Arbiter.

7. Chapter 7: Falling Back

Chapter Seven: Falling Back

ONI Research Lab Seattle, September 5, 2559, 5:10 am

The director of ONI was leaning against the wall of his office in the

ONI tower, overlooking the battle far below the penthouse office of this fine establishment. The elevator door that led into the room opened, revealing the same ONI official that had been on the Infinity to identify the remains of S-117s armor.

"The good doctor lied to us," he said, walking up to the director.

"How so?" the director asked, inhaling smoke from his cigarette.

"She claimed the armor did belong to S-117."

"Hmpf. It seems Halsey thinks she is outsmarting us. But that is not important at the moment. How is the patient?"

"She's doing fine sir. The hardlight missed her brain by only a few inches. I don't see why we have to keep her secret, thought."

"That is irrelevant. Have you captured one of the rouge Spartans?"

"Several, sir," the official replied. "DNA tests reveal that all of them were confirmed KIA in the Reclamation of Earth."

"Clones?"

The official nodded. "That's what it looks like. We presume that someone is leading the attack, and we've narrowed it down to a likely possibility."

"I'm all ears."

"Our theory is this; Spartan B340's quarters aboard the Infinity were searched, and we found 134 blood samples from deceased Spartans. According to his journal, he had 343. That means quite a few were missing."

"What does this have to do with the leader of this madness?"

"Sir, we think that there is a rouge AI flying around somewhere. Intercepted transmissions from Spartans B340 and S6784 have indicated that they are in pursuit of the Infinity's Captian Regenald Deland, whom they believed is possessed with an AI of unknown origin." He sighed. "The AI in question is in relation to the one that some of the current members of Fireteam Rose and Violet stopped years ago."

"I see. And where is Deland heading?"

The official gulped. "Here sir." As if on cue, several Spartans broke through the windows, flying on jetpacks. Each had an MA5D and trained them on the ONI personnel.

"Where are you keeping Doctor Halsey?" the leader asked.

The director paid the Spartan no mind, as he was looking at the ship that had appeared in the city a few seconds ago. It was one that was famous among ONI. The Shadow of Intent.

Seattle Streets, September 5, 2559 5: 13am

"Well, my day just got a lot more shitty!" Ginger exclaimed as he saw the ship. It was Covenant in appearance, but it seemed to be holding its ground, and not firing at every human city it saw.

"This is UNSC Fleet Admiral Terrence Hood to all UNSC forces. The Arbiter, Thel Vadum, has committed all of his Sangheili forces to the city of Seattle in an attempt to aid the UNSC in putting down the rebellion. Do not fire at Elites, they are not with the Storm Covenant."

"Isn't that just peachy?" Simmons commented, dodging two abandoned cars in the middle of the road. The Mongoose had reached its top speed, and the engine was on the verge of over heating.

"This seems so unrealistic," Ginger said, "but yet it's happening."

Several Pelicans flew overhead, engines roaring over the noise of the Mongoose. They all seemed to be heading toward a UNSC frigate just outside the city, hanging in low orbit.

"The question now is whether those are our Pelicans, or theirs," Simmons said as the Mongoose slowed to a stop. Ahead of them blocking the road were several Elites, dressed in the former Covenant armor. Three blue and one red. Cars and wrecked UNSC vehicles had been piled up on the highway in order to prevent any of the rouge Spartans in or out through this passage.

"Hey, we need to get through!" Ginger shouted to the Sangheili. They stared at him.

"What is your purpose?" The Major clad in read armor asked.

"We're after some dude that had to have come through here," Simmons replied, revving the Mongoose's engine.

"No one has come through here in the past few hours," The Major replied, putting his Beam Rifle on his back.

"Dammit!" Ginger threw his BR55 to the ground, pissed. "We lost Deland," he muttered to Simmons, who nodded and turned the Mongoose around.

"This is Commander Frank Burns, temporary commander of the Spartan Fireteams. We're recalling all UNSC Spartans to the UNSC Infinity, as we prepare to chase after the fleeing rouges."

Ginger connected to the comm channel. "Can I ask a question, sir?"

"You just did, but shoot."

"If we chased them off planet, then how will we track them? They would have gone into slipspace, right?" Ginger glanced up as a Pelican flew towards them, preparing to pick the two Spartans.

_"The Sangheili are showing us some of their old tricks on how they

tracked us so many years ago." _There was a rush of static on the line, indicating a sigh. _"Thing is, I don't know if I can trust them. Their kind killed my entire family on Jericho IV."_

Simmons jumped in the open hatch of the Pelican with several other Spartans, while Ginger slowly walked on. The blue Spartan banged his fist on the wall, informing the pilot that they were ready for dust off. "I don't have great experiences with Elites myself," Ginger replied to the Commander.

"...Do you want to talk about it?"

"What? This ain't Doctor Phil," Ginger said, deciding to cut the channel before that got any weirder. "Simmons, you know were the rest of the team is?"

"No sir," The maroon Spartan answered, pulling a datapad out of a pouch on his armor. "After we all split up, everything went to hell."

Ginger cursed to himself. "Find them as soon as you can."

"Yes sir."

The Pelican's engines roared loudly as the dropship went up into the atmosphere. It was quiet in the troop hatch, and dark. The only light came from the red emergency lights, and the glow of Simmons datapad.

The Infinity was waiting, and the hanger was, for once, in complete silence. Ginger walked over to the orange avatar of Roland, who was watching the dropships come in.

"Who's the Captian?" Ginger asked, removing his helmet and looking over the crowd of Spartans in the hanger for his team and Lachlan's.

"Fleet Admiral Terrence Hood himself," Roland replied, turning toward an incoming Pelican. Several medics ran over, and began removing the Spartans inside. Their armor had been removed, and it took four ODSTs to carry one of them. The other three were carried by Marines.

Ginger caught a glimpse of the wounded. "What the hell happened?" He asked Lachlan, as the stretchers passed by.

"You won't believe it," Lachlan replied, leaning back on his stretcher. He and the remains of the two Fireteams were taken to the infirmary.

A final Pelican flew in, with the final member of Fireteam Violet in it. Caboose jumped out, and casually looked around, and when he saw Ginger, he ran over to him.

"Hey Cinammon? Do you know where we're going?" Caboose asked.

Ginger raised his eyebrows. "It's Ginger, and no, I have no clue."

"Trust me, you never get used to his stupidity," Simmons said. "But,

still, he hasn't been acting as stupid recently."

"Is that a bad thing?" Ginger asked.

"Well, to hell if I know."

Looking around, Ginger saw some Marines packing crates into the back of a Transport Warthog. "Hey Caboose, go help them."

"Okay. Are there buttons over there? I'm good with buttons."

"Just help them."

Simmons watched as the blue left for the Marines. "What do you have against those soldiers?" he asked Ginger.

"Um...nothing. Why?" Ginger questioned.

"Telling Caboose to help someone usually ends badly." As if to prove his point, Caboose knocked over the entire stack of crates. The Marines yelled at him, and Caboose walked away with his head down.

"I guess that was going to happen," Ginger sighed, and headed to the bridge.

Requiem, September 5, 2559, 6:45am

Deland held the test tube in his hands, looking at the crimson blood. He had managed to escape his pursuers, and make it to the cloning building through the portal. Smirking, he was ready to begin the final cloning.

"Please inform Captain Freer to prepare the augmentation lab," the corrupted Deland said. The Forerunner AI had complete control over him. Turning to the clone of Sarah Palmer, another smirk crossed his face.

"I'm afraid that you're needed no longer," he told her. A confused look appeared on her face.

"But I thought I was--"

"No, you were to be my vessel, I was to use your body as my own, and get the Didact's revenge." Deland held up the blood sample. "But then I found the DNA of the famous Reclaimer. The one who killed the Didact."

Palmer's confusion was lost when a look of fear spread across her face as Deland pulled a Magnum out and aimed it at her head. "Goodbye, Palmer."

She squeezed her eyes shut, and winced when the pistol fired. Breathing deeply out of fear, she found herself still alive. Risking opening her eyes, she saw the Captian on the ground, clutching his blood-stained wrist. Another man stood at the door, holding a Magnum that was smoking from the barrel. He wore a white tee shirt, with a few tears and rips. His face was cut and bruised in several places.

"Make one more move, and I'll kill you, Deland," former Captian Thomas Lasky.

**A/N: Well, I updated again. I kinda slacked off since 6/7 reviews were for chapters 1-2, even though I just made it to seven.**

**Anywho, expect normal updates for the time being, as I just got a massively good idea on how this will all end.**

8. Chapter 8: Tactics

Chapter Eight: Tactics

UNSC Infinity, September 5, 2559, 6:02am

Ginger walked into the bridge, Simmons close behind him. Lord Hood and other high-ranking officials stood over a holographic projection of the city, smoke coming from some of the buildings.

"Sergeant," Hood acknowledged, glancing up at the Spartan. Ginger saluted, while Simmons turned and walked away, muttering something about Sarge and Grif might be trying to kill each other.

"Anything new developing, sir?" Ginger set his Recon helmet on the table, propping himself up against a computer terminal.

Hood stroked his chin, before folding his arms behind his back. "Civilian death tolls were minimal, but we easily lost a quarter of our Spartans."

Ginger let out a low whistle. "That's a lot."

"The Arbiter was willing, more than willing, to send us some Sangheili ships to help put down this rebellion," Hood explained as he waved his hand at the three Elite ships hanging in orbit of Earth. "Civilians are quite jittery about them, though."

"That's not what we should be focused on right now, sir," Ginger said. "We need to find out where these "rebels" went."

"They did escape the planet," Hood confirmed. "We tracked them to...take a guess."

"Like I would know."

"It's the one planet that seems to always come into play, no matter what situation."

Ginger groaned. "Requiem?"

Hood nodded. "There is something there that their leader wants, or so we presume." The hologram switched from burning Seattle to Requiem. "We're going to make sure that he doesn't get it."

"With all due respect sir, if that is true, we don't know what it is Deland wants," Ginger folded his arms across his chest. "How would we get it before him?"

Moving his hands from his back, Hood rubbed the back of his neck.
"That's the tricky part. We'll have to destroy Requiem."

Ginger nearly fell to the ground. "We don't have the technology, sir! It would take over 100,000,000 Infinitys, with even more power that it has to do that!"

"We can improvise," Hood said. "The Infinity will be reaching the planet in three to four weeks, so get to the War Games, or the Cryo Bay."

Ginger saluted, grabbed his helmet and left to find Destinee. This couldn't be happening. Nothing like this should even happen in the first place. Why was everything happening like this?

Requiem, September 5, 2559, 6:23am

Lasky had his Magnum aimed at Deland's head, ready to pull the trigger if necessary. He looked over towards the clone of Palmer, huddling in the corner. It had been hard losing her the first time, and he wasn't going to let her die this time.

His eyes filled with rage as he turned back to Deland, who was standing up, blood dripping from the hole in his wrist. "The game's over Deland," Lasky said, raising the pistol at the Captain's head. "Surrender."

"That's where you're wrong, Lasky," Deland smiled, and the click of cocked guns reverberated throughout the cloning tower's main chamber. Lasky turned, and faced a full Fireteam of Spartans, weapons in hand.

"I will now claim my prize," Deland picked up the blood sample from the floor, a tube with the numbers 117 written on it. "There is nothing you can do to stop me now."

One of the Spartans moved over and took his pistol. He was shoved to the floor, next to Palmer. Lasky's mind was racing for a plan. If Deland cloned the Master Chief, then he could...he honestly didn't know what Deland would be capable of.

But if he could destroy the blood sample, then he would solve that problem, right? But even if Deland, or whatever it was, took over the Master Chief's clone, they wouldn't have the skill that Spartans received from their training. But, he could easily use the body of Spartan 117 to influence civilians and whatnot. He could not allow something like that to happen.

Even if it cost him his life.

With a yell of anger, Lasky stood up and ran at Deland who had turned toward the cloning console. Everything slowed around him as Lasky ran, and he barely heard the DMR shots being fired. But he certainly felt the rounds hitting him.

He reached Deland, and fell into a dead-mans-dive on top of the hand that held the tube. Lasky's vision blurred and darkened as he heard a cracking beneath him, meaning that the tube had broken, and John's blood was most likely mixed with his own.

His last thoughts were of Sarah Palmer, and how much she had meant to him. He would be seeing her soon.

Deland stared at the bodies, or rather the AI possessing him was. He reached over and rolled Lasky over, revealing a massive pool of blood. "Separate the Reclaimer's blood as soon as possible," he ordered the Spartans. Then he noticed Palmer's clone in the corner. "Kill her."

UNSC Infinity Medical Bay, September 6, 1:13pm

"What, that's it?" Lachlan attempted to stand up, but his nurse pushed him back down to the bed. "That's not much of a plan."

"Yeah, so?" Tucker asked. "We get to blow something up." He glanced around the room, before his eyes stopped on the nurse's rear. "Perhaps we should send Caboose to help those rebels, or whatever they are."

"Hey, what happen to Church?" Ginger asked, looking at the current members of Fireteam Violet. Caboose was somewhere, and Tucker and Lachlan were here.

Lachlan growled weakly and turned his head to the wall.

"What?"

"We lost him in the fight. Our Warthog crashed, and we got pinned down," Lachlan sighed. "He gave his life to save ours."

Ginger put his hand on his firend's shoulder, and looked a Tucker. "You don't seem too disturbed at Church's death."

Tucker just stared at them. "Why would I be? After all, he's just a..." Tucker realized that he had said too much.

"He's just a what?" Lachlan pressed.

"Classified."

"Tell me right now, or I'll get you court marshalled."

"You know what?" Ginger said, as he left the room. "I'm going to sleep in a nice, cold cryo tube for three weeks, and you two argue over this."

Ginger made his way through the ship, and into the cryo bay. It was relatively empty, so he would have no trouble getting a tube away from everyone.

He walked into the 100-199 tube section, stopping in front of cryotube 117. "What the hell?" he muttered as he lay down in it, and let sleep overcome him...

Caboose's Dream (oh hell) September 6, 1:17pm

Caboose was standing alone, looking out over the box canyon where he had first met Church and Tucker. It was a really nice place, and there was even Sheila in the background, driving here and there.

He looked up as a white flash...flashed, and saw a figure materializing.

"Oh, hello nice lady that I've never met," Caboose greeted.

"Michael J. Caboose, we need to talk."

"What are we going to talk about? How about buttons?"

Smiling the woman shook her head. "Perhaps later. Right now, I'm going to ask you to do me a big favor."

"What is the favor? Does it have anything to do with buttons? I'm good with buttons."

"Eventually it will, but I need you to remember some numbers."

"Uh...okay," Caboose agreed. "Then can I play with buttons?"

"I need you to remember the numbers; 117, 0452-9, and 343. "Can you do that?"

"Um...yeah. Wait, what was I supposed to do again?"

9. Chapter 9: The Beginning of The End

Chapter Nine: Beginning of the End

Requiem's Orbit, September 27, 2559, 3:34pm

Ginger tore his eyes open. The cryo tube was opening at a slow rate, and alarms were blaring all over the ship. Blood was splattered against all the walls, and bodies were laying everywhere. "What the hell happened?"

No one was there to answer him, so he decided to find out for himself. A DMR was laying on the ground in front of him, so he took the weapon. "Fireteam Rose?" he asked into the comms. All he got was static.

"You're alive!" a voice shouted.

He looked for the source of the voice, and his eyes settled on a teal figure projected on a holotank. "Destinee? What in the hell happened?" Ginger gusted to the dead bodies, Spartan and other UNSC personnel, that littered the floor. "I think I might have missed something."

Destinee frowned. "When the Infinity reached Requiem, those rebelling Spartans, or whatever they are, attacked the Infinity, and managed to kill most of everyone." She seemed emotionally unstable at the moment. "It was horrible fighting."

All that info took a minute to sink in. The UNSC's largest ship, the Infinity, had been attacked by a group of rouges who had retreated in a single frigate. When Ginger finally found his voice, he asked; "Who were the survivors?"

Destinee brought back a small grin. "Guess who."

"Lachlan."

"And Fireteams Rose and Violet," Destinee said. Ginger took her chip out of the terminal, and walked towards the hanger, stepping over half-decayed bodies.

"Anyone still on the ship?" Ginger asked, entering the first hanger to reveal that it was empty.

"Roland, but that's it," Destinee answered. "He transferred all the power into the bridge to prevent the rouges from activating the engines and escaping. He gave me a small amount to wake you up."

Ginger sighed as the second bay was empty as well. "Where do we go?" He asked.

"The survivors are holed up on Requiem, in the Covenant Remnants base," Destinee informed him. "And they too got hit."

Ginger sighed. "This can't get any worse can it?"

"Yeah, it can," Destinee said as she brought up the official casualty report on Ginger's HUD. "Look at the top."

"Lord Hood? You mean he's dead?"

Destinee nodded. "This is hard to imagine."

"So, what's the plan?"

A 3D model of Requiem appeared on his HUD. "We're going to finish what the Infinity was planning to do; destroy Requiem."

"Destinee," Ginger said in annoyance. "We can't. We don't have the firepower."

"Hear me out," she said, and she blew up the picture of Requiem to show three pillar islands in the middle of an ocean on the Forerunner planet. "There is a way to steer Requiem out of orbit, and into the nearby star," she explained. "There are two terminals that have to be activated to do this."

"One is on the largest island," Destinee informed him, highlighting the island. "The other is on the other side of the planet."

The third hanger bore fruit in the form of a slightly smoking Pelican. "It can still fly, right?" the Spartan asked his AI.

Destinee nodded, before releasing a breath. "It should be fine." She put on a concerned face as Ginger sat down at the controls of the dropship. "You do know that there will be a small amount of time to get off the planet after the orbit is disrupted, right?"

Ginger sighed as he ignited the engines. "I'll worry about that when I get there." The Pelican flew out of the hanger and into space. For the first time since the attack, Destinee saw the exterior of the

Infinity.

Holes were blasted in the side, along with several missing sections of outer steel, exposing the interior to the void of space.

"Destinee, a single frigate could not cause that much damage alone," Ginger noted, as he flew toward the opening of the Forerunner shield world. "What footage of the battle is available?"

"None."

Ginger looked Destinee in the eyes through the comm screen. "Okay, so. The UNSC's biggest ship gets attacked and devastated by a single frigate, and there is not a single second of footage."

"Yes."

"Destinee, are you functioning properly?"

"Scanning...Affirmative."

Ginger sighed again. "This is not normal."

* * *

><p>Covenant Remnants FOB Base, Requiem, September 27, 2559, 3:35pm

The ground quaked when a rocket impacted the Covenant barricades blocking that were being used as cover for the troops making a stand.

"Incoming!"

"Grif!" Simmons shouted. The maroon Spartan was crouching behind a barrier, holding his Battle Rifle tight in his hands. "You have to shout that before the rockets impact."

"I did," Grif said. "But my helmet speakers are lagging."

Eray and the Remnants were evacuating the base, while the Spartans and several Hunters and a few Jackal snipers were holding off the invading force. Bullets were hammering the barricades, completely forcing them into cover.

"Okay men, we need to make a charge," Sarge ordered, as he crouched-walked over to them.

"Um..." Simmons held up two clips and a couple of batteries for a Railgun. "This is all the ammunition that I have, sir. I even stole Grif's ammo as well, and that was used up a long time ago."

"Oh..." Grif face palmed. "No wonder this weapon wasn't shooting. I thought it was broken."

"Grif, you're the sniper bait," Sarge said. "Go out there and get shot. We need to know where the snipers are."

Lachlan army crawled over, shotgun tucked between his elbows. "Sarge, we need anti-aircraft fire," he ordered. "There is a Pelican heading right at us."

Simmons held up his Railgun. "I'm on it." He poked the gun out of cover, and located the incoming aircraft, taking aim.

"Any luck on locating the jammer's they're using?" Lachlan asked Sarge. The black armored Spartan moved into a squatting position, removing his helmet to wipe the sweat from his face.

"Both recon teams are KIA," the red armored Spartan replied.

Before Lachlan could respond, an explosion echoed throughout the base. "What happened?" He asked to anyone who heard him.

"Rebels shot down the Pelican," Simmons answered. "It spiraled into the ground. Lovely sight." They sat in silence as they waited for...

"The artillery has stopped," Girf noted. "Why would they stop shooting at us?"

Tucker limped over, clutching his lower chest with a single arm, dragging his BR55 with the other. "They're invisible," he said, in a weak voice before collapsing to the ground.

"What did he say about invis-" Simmons was cut off when twin plasma blades stabbed through his chest, hitting his heart and instantly killing him.

Several weapons were raised, aiming in every direction. "Switch HUD to thermal," Lachlan ordered, as his vision was turned green, with a massive red blob in front of him. A single shotgun shot later, the rebel was dead.

But, that was the only kill they got in before they were completely overwhelmed...

* * *

><p>Covenant Remnants FOB Base, Requiem, September 27, 2559, 7:21pm

Ginger groaned as he woke. taking a few minutes for his vision to return to normal. He was still in his Pelican, but it had crashed straight into the ground.

"What the hell happened?" he asked wairly. Smoke filled the cabin, along and the controls were sparking.

"We were hit," Destinee replied. "We spun in, and hit the ground hard."

Ginger grabbed BR85 laying on the floor next to him, and made his way out of the Pelican. As he exited, he saw a rather interesting sight. Spartans lay dead all around him. Most had Beam Rifle burns on their heads or necks, but a few had SRS damage, and some were missing limbs entirely.

"Don't worry," Destinee said. "These are the rebels, not the UNSC Spartans."

"Good," Ginger muttered, as he saw the Covenant Remnants in the distance. He began the walk to it, heading up hill. As he got closer, the amount of rebel Spartan bodies seemed to increase. Apparently, the UNSC Spartans had held the hill.

At the top of the hill, there were more bodies, and Ginger heard Destinee let out a sigh. "These are the UNSC Spartans..."

Looking around, Ginger saw the bodies of Fireteam Violet and Rose, excluding Lachlan's. He must have survived. Ginger dropped his gun at the sight of Simmons and Grif, laying dead next to each other.

"I should have been faster," he said, taking the blame on himself. "They would have lived if had had woken up faster, right?"

Destinee was silent. "...yes, they would have, but you can't give up hope. "We're so close to ending this all right here. We have to destroy Requiem."

"What's the point?" Ginger asked. "The UNSC has been severely crippled, losing most, if not all, of it's Spartans. The Insurrection would move in a wipe them out within days. We lost."

"You're giving up? You can't!" Destinee shouted in his ear. "Last year, when the Covenant invaded Earth for the second time, did you give up? No, you and the Master Chief and Lachlan stuck it out, and fought to the end. And, now you're alone, and you have to finish the fight yourself."

"Just look around you!" Ginger snapped. "Everyone else is dead! I'm the last of the UNSC Spartans!"

"No, no your not." Sarge walked over from behind some rocks.

"You're alive?" Ginger asked. "Who else is?"

"I thought that nap time came before pants time," Caboose said, walking over next to Sarge, looking around at all the dead bodies.

"Still wished you asked?" Sarge asked. Ginger shook his head. "What's the plan?" Sarge put his Shotgun on his back, and folded his arms.

"Well...we only have on shot at this," Ginger said. "Destinee, pull up the maps on Sarge's HUD." Destinee nodded on the comm screen when she had. "We're destroying Requiem, and there are two places we need to go to do so." Two dots lit up on the map. "I'm going solo to one, while you, Caboose, and Destinee are going to the other."

Destinee shook her head. "No, I'm sticking with you," she said. "I already lost the first Spartan that I was assigned to. I'm not going anywhere without you."

"I'm not giving you a choice, Destinee," Ginger said. "You're going with them, and they are getting you out of here."

"What about you?" Destinee asked, looking away.

Ginger sighed. "For some odd reason, I get the feeling that I'm not coming back from this fight this time. And I want you off the planet."

There was quiet for a few seconds, and a waypoint appeared on Ginger's HUD. "I've marked the waypoints," Destinee said. "I guess I'm ready to go. I'm all packed."

Reaching behind his head, Ginger removed her chip, and handed it to Sarge. "Take care of her."

Sarge nodded. "I will." He pointed at the base. "There's two Phantoms in there, we can use them to get there faster."

Ginger nodded, and they walked into the base, and over to the Phantoms. Above them was an open roof, which allowed the dropships out. "As soon as you have activated the terminal there, get you ass back to the Infinity, and if I'm not already there, leave with out me."

"Understood," Sarge replied, heading for one of the Phantoms, Caboose in tow. "Do me a favor, and spare me the grief of having to lose my CO."

"I'll do my best," Ginger said grimly. "But don't get your hopes up."

They entered their vehicles, and took off, flying toward their destiny.

* * *

><p>AN: What's up? I'm back with the next chapter of this story. I'll admit that I wasn't exactly pleased with this story, I felt that I hadn't done so well. But, I'm gonna finish it anyway, so it doesn't bug me. So, yay!**_

End
file.